TL 2882

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MR. CHAIRMAN,

I HAVE THE HONOUR TO TAKE THE FLOOR UNDER AGENDA ITEM 10 ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION.

THE CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNION - BULGARIA, THE CZECH REPUBLIC, LITHUANIA, POLAND, SLOVAKIA - AND THE ASSOCIATED COUNTRY MALTA HAVE EXPRESSED THE WISH TO ALIGN THEMSELVES WITH THIS STATEMENT. CYPRUS, ESTONIA, HUNGARY, LATVIA AND ROMANIA [1]

THE VIENNA DECLARATION AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION REAFFIRMED THAT STATES HAVE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS WHICH IS A LEGITIMATE CONCERN OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. GOVERNMENTS SHOULD BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE WHEN VIOLATIONS TAKE PLACE, AND NO SCREEN OF DOMESTIC JURISDICTION OR NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY CAN PREVENT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY FROM IDENTIFYING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND DEMANDING THAT GOVERNMENTS REMEDY ACTS THAT OFFEND THE CONSCIENCE AND VALUES OF HUMANKIND. OVER THE LAST YEAR, IMPROVEMENTS HAVE BEEN RECORDED IN MANY PLACES, BUT VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS CONTINUE TO OCCUR.

THE EUROPEAN UNION CALLS ON ALL STATES TO BECOME PARTIES TO INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS AND TO COOPERATE IN GOOD FAITH WITH THE MECHANISMS OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

EVER SINCE THE SUMMER OF 1992, WHEN TWO SPECIAL SESSIONS WERE CONVENED AND A SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR APPOINTED, THIS BODY HAS FOLLOWED CLOSELY THE QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE TERRITORY OF THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA.

AT THE PRESENT SESSION, FOR THE FIRST TIME CONCRETE PROSPECTS OF STABILISATION AND PEACE HAVE MATERIALIZED FOR THE WHOLE OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA THANKS TO THE DAYTON/PARIS AGREEMENTS. THE EUROPEAN UNION STRONGLY SUPPORTS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THAT AGREEMENT. IN THIS CONTEXT, THE EUROPEAN UNION ADMINISTRATION OF MOSTAR CONTINUED TO PAVE THE WAY FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION. THE ROME CONFERENCE AS WELL AS THE SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS IN GENEVA AND MOSCOW GAVE NEW IMPETUS TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PEACE AGREEMENTS ON BOSNIA. IN FACT, RESPECT OF THE COMMITMENTS UNDERTAKEN BY ALL THE PARTIES IS THE ONLY WAY TO ENSURE FULL OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

LIGHT WILL HAVE TO BE SHED ON MASSIVE VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN LAW AS REPORTED BY MS. REHN. A FUTURE OF RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS REQUIRES THAT THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR WAR CRIMES AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE. WE REITERATE OUR FIRM SUPPORT FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL TRIBUNAL AND WISH TO EMPHASIZE ONCE AGAIN THE OBLIGATION OF ALL PARTIES TO FULLY COOPERATE WITH IT, INCLUDING PRESERVATION OF EVIDENCE AND HANDING OVER OF PERSONS INDICTED BY THE TRIBUNAL. THE PARTIES MUST ALSO PROVIDE UNRESTRICTED ACCESS TO PLACES, SUCH AS MASS GRAVES SITES, AND TO PERSONS WITH RELEVANT INFORMATION.

IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PEACE ACCORDS RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS HAS BEEN GIVEN THE HIGHEST PRIORITY, INCLUDING BY MEANS OF INSTITUTIONS AND MECHANISMS TO SAFEGUARD HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE FUTURE. THE PARTIES IN BOSNIA ARE BOUND TO SECURE TO ALL PERSONS UNDER THEIR JURISDICTION THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS. WE WELCOME THE

[1] These countries will be sending their replies later.

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ACTIVITIES OF NGOS.

CONCERNING SRI LANKA, WE STRONGLY CONDEMN TERRORISM AND CALL ON THE PARTIES TO REACH A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT TO THE CONFLICT. IN THIS CONTEXT, WE WELCOME THE "DEVOLUTION PACKAGE". THIS CONFLICT HAS COST THE LIVES OF FAR TOO MANY CIVILIANS. WE WELCOME THE READINESS OF THE GOVERNMENT IN COLOMBO TO TAKE EFFECTIVE MEASURES TO PREVENT AND PUNISH VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN LAW BY THE ARMED FORCES DURING OPERATIONS AGAINST THE LTTE.

WE CONTINUE TO FOLLOW WITH SERIOUS CONCERN THE GRAVE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN EAST TIMOR. REPORTS EMANATING FROM DIFFERENT SOURCES INDICATE THAT VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS CONTINUE TO TAKE PLACE, AGGRAVATED BY ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS TENSIONS, AND THAT A GENERAL ATMOSPHERE OF DISTRUST PREVAILS PROMPTING NUMEROUS YOUNGSTERS TO FLEE THE TERRITORY.

WE HAVE WELCOMED THE COOPERATION THAT THE INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT HAS EXTENDED TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, INCLUDING HIS RECENT VISIT TO THE TERRITORY, AND WE CALL ON INDONESIA TO IMPLEMENT FULLY HIS RECOMMENDATIONS. WE CALL ON INDONESIA TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO THE TERRITORY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN ORGANISATIONS AS WELL AS INTERNATIONAL MEDIA. WE URGE THE INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT TO TAKE URGENT MEASURES TO IMPROVE THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN EAST TIMOR, INCLUDING THROUGH RELEASE OF MR. XANANA GUSMAO AND ALL OTHER POLITICAL PRISONERS, AND IN GENERAL ABIDE BY THE DELIBERATIONS OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

WE STRESS THAT COOPERATION IS NECESSARY ALSO WITH THE RELEVANT MECHANISMS OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS. IN PARTICULAR, WE REGRET THAT, CONTRARY TO WHAT INDONESIA HAS COMMITTED ITSELF TO SINCE 1994, THERE WERE NO POSITIVE ANSWERS TO THE REPEATED REQUESTS OF THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON TORTURE AND OF THE WORKING GROUP ON ARBITRARY DETENTIONS TO UNDERTAKE A VISIT TO EAST TIMOR NOR HAS THE WORKING GROUP ON ENFORCED OR INVOLUNTARY DISAPPEARANCES RECEIVED INFORMATIONS FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF INDONESIA CONCERNING THE CASES TRANSMITTED TO THE INDONESIAN AUTHORITIES SINCE NOVEMBER 1991.

WE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN PORTUGAL AND INDONESIA UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL WITH A VIEW TO FINDING A JUST, COMPREHENSIVE AND INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SETTLEMENT OF THE QUESTION, RESPECTING THE LEGITIMATE ASPIRATIONS OF THE EAST TIMORESE AND IN CONFORMITY WITH THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS. WE EXPRESS OUR SATISFACTION THAT, IN THE CONTEXT OF THIS DIALOGUE, A SECOND ALL-INCLUSIVE EAST TIMORESE MEETING TOOK PLACE FROM 18 TO 22 MARCH IN BURG SCHLAINING, AUSTRIA. THE EUROPEAN UNION ALSO WELCOMED THE MEETING BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT OF INDONESIA AND THE PRIME MINISTER OF PORTUGAL WHICH TOOK PLACE IN BANGKOK AT THE MARGIN OF THE ASIA-EUROPE SUMMIT AND WHICH WILL HOPEFULLY CONTRIBUTE TO THE SETTLEMENT OF THE QUESTION OF EAST TIMOR.

THE EUROPEAN UNION CONTINUES TO FOLLOW THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHINA WITH GREAT ATTENTION. WE WELCOME THE WILLINGNESS OF THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT TO COOPERATE WITH ALL SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS AND WORKING GROUPS OF THE COMMISSION AND TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES IN THE FRAMEWORK OF BILATERAL DIALOGUES. WE INVITE THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA TO SIGN AND RATIFY THE COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS AS WELL AS THAT ON CIVIL AND